DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 200 120 HE 013 604

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TITLE Women in Higher Education Administration: Status and Strategies.
INSTITUTION American Association of Univ. Administrators, Oneonta, N.Y.; ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education, Washington, D.C.
SPONS AGENCY National Inst. of Education (ED), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE 81
NOTE 7p.
AVAILABLE FROM American Association of University Administrators, P.O. Box 536, Oneonta, NY 13820 ($.50).
JOURNAL CIT Administrator's Update: v2 n3 Win 1981

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Administrator Education: *Administrators: Administrator Selection: Affirmative Action: *College Administration: Conferences: Decision Making: *Employed Women: Employment Level: Employment Practices: *Equal Opportunities (Jobs): *Females: Higher Education: Institutes (Training Programs): Males: National Organizations: Personnel Policy: Policy Formation: Professional Associations: Promotion (Occupational): Recruitment: Salary Wage Differentials: *Sex Discrimination: Status: Workshops

ABSTRACT

The status of women in higher education administration and strategies for increasing their numbers are considered, based on research studies on women and job structures in higher education, and from information on organizations and programs. General observations based on the studies include the following: women are underrepresented in major college policy-making positions and are clustered in low-level and middle-level stereotyped administrative positions: the problem is especially severe for minority women: women administrators are paid less than male administrators: the structure of the job market in higher education limits opportunities for women in higher education administration: and steady-state conditions in colleges and universities will jeopardize recent gains for women. Strategies to improve the situation may involve national and regional organizational activities and institutional practices and programs. Specific women's organizations and councils/caucuses of more broadly based professional associations that may be of assistance are briefly described, along with institutes, internships and other training programs, workshops, and conferences that have been developed for women administrators or that are committed to affirmative action. A variety of institutional programs and activities, including affirmative hiring goals and training programs for support personnel are identified. Individual initiatives that women administrators can take to improve their situation are also outlined. References are included. (SW)

ED200120

ADMINISTRATOR'S UPDATE

Volume 2, Number 3, Winter, 1981

American Association of University Administrators

ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education

Women in Higher Education Administration: Status and Strategies

By Cheryl Schratz Finlay and Patricia H. Crosson

Although the number of women administrators in higher education has increased and their status has improved during the last decade, they have not attained positions and status in proportion to their numbers and contributions to colleges and universities. This article explores the status of women in higher education administration and suggests strategies for increasing their numbers. It is intended for college and university administrative officers and for women interested in advancement to administrative positions. The information is drawn from survey data and studies on women in higher education, from studies of job structures in higher education, and from information on many organizations and programs. Although the surveys used different institutional populations, job categories, and other items for comparison, some general observations can be made.

Although the number of women administrators in higher education has increased and their status has improved during the last decade, they have not attained positions and status in proportion to their numbers and contributions to colleges and universities.

1. Women are underrepresented in major policy-making positions in colleges and universities.

- In 1977, only 5 percent of the over 2,500 accredited colleges and universities surveyed by the American Council on Education were headed by women. Eighty percent of these women were heads of small secretarial colleges; only five public institutions were headed by women (Hall 1977). Two years later, Sandler's study found that women college presidents constituted 6.8 percent of all college presidents in the United States (1979).
- In 1979, 15 percent of over 47,000 members of the governing boards of colleges and universities were women (Gappa and Uehling 1979).
- Sixty percent of institutions responding to a survey conducted by the National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges had no women administrators in 1970-71 (***Chronicle of Higher Education*** 3/1/76). In a different study, Sandler reports that by 1979, 16 percent of all administrative posts were held by women (1979).
- While the overall number and percentage of women administrators have increased, they remain disproportionate by type of institution. Of 18,000 full-time administrators, women held 52 percent of the administrative positions at women's colleges: four times greater than the percentage of white women administrators in all institutions (Van Alstyne and Withers 1977). In most colleges and universities, the top four administrative positions -- president, provost, chief fiscal officer, and dean -- are held by men. Ninety-five percent of college students attend such institutions (Sandler 1979).

While the overall number and percentage of women administrators have increased, they remain disproportionate by type of institution.

2. Women administrators are clustered in low- and middle-level stereotyped administrative positions.

All surveys report that women are concentrated in lower level positions -- assistant to the dean (or director), assistant dean (or director), and associate dean (or director) (Sandler 1979) -- or in positions that "reinforce feminine stereotypes about women's skills in student counseling and service related occupations" (Gappa and Uehling 1979, p.46) -- head librarian, nursing dean, bookstore manager, registrar, student financial aid director, home economics dean, and information office director (Van Alstyne and Withers 1977).

3. The problem is especially severe for minority women.

In 1977, of all colleges only two were headed by minority women and only 2 percent of all administrative posts were held by minority women (Hall 1977).

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4. Women administrators are paid less than male administrators.

Women, both white and minority, are paid only 80 percent as much as men with the same title employed by the same type of institution (Sandler 1979). While many surveys have noted discrepancies in salaries, even when controlling for institutional type and position, there is still not enough evidence to establish conclusively that salary differences result from discrimination in the labor market (Van Alstyne and Withers 1977). There does not seem to be sufficient demand for women administrators, however, to cause institutions to increase salaries to be able to attract them.

5. The structure of the job market in Higher Education limits opportunities for women in higher education administration.

Most colleges and universities have horizontal administrative structures that assume highly developed and highly specialized functions incorporating many short career ladders (Kanter 1979; Scott 1979). Each area has very few positions -- or rungs -- and it is easy to become dead-ended at the top of the ladder. It is extremely difficult to advance to a vice presidency from such "director" positions because expectations about the appropriate experience and credentials for vice president are different. It is difficult to move across ladders into new specialty areas because colleges and universities usually do not offer training and development programs to make such transfers possible. As a consequence, many administrators in higher education are "stuck," which has implications for job performance and morale but, more importantly, impedes progress toward improving the status of women administrators.

Many administrators in higher education are "stuck." which has implications for job performance and morale but, more importantly, impedes progress toward improving the status of women administrators.

6. Steady state conditions in colleges and universities will jeopardize recent gains for women.

The current financial conditions and problems of enrollment faced by colleges and universities have an important impact on administrative opportunities for women. Colleges and universities are not hiring new administrators as rapidly as they did during the 1960s and 1970s, and mobility across institutions has been reduced. Only a few highly technical types of positions show evidence of growth in size and importance (Scott 1979). Most others have remained stable or have declined. In such conditions, it is difficult for colleges and universities to make up for past inadequate representation of women on administrative staffs, simply because openings are not available to hire new people or to advance women to higher positions.

STRATEGIES

A number of strategies can be used to increase the number of women administrators. Some involve national and regional organizations and activities, others result from institutional practices and programs, and still others call for individual initiative from women administrators. Substantial progress could result from the combination of strategies, depending on individual circumstances and institutional needs. To take advantage of the opportunities requires commitment and dedication from institutions and individuals.

Organizations, Associations, and Special Programs

A number of women's organizations and women's councils or caucuses of more broadly based professional associations aim to help both women seeking advancement and institutions seeking to identify candidates for leadership positions (***Chronicle of Higher Education*** 9/2/80).

Project on the Status of Education of Women

Founded by the Association of American Colleges in 1971, the Project provides a liaison between women, institutions, the government, and other women's organizations. Of particular note are its newsletter and topical papers, which cover many issues pertaining to women, including status reports on women in higher education administration.

National Association for Women Deans, Administrators, and Counselors (NAWDAC)

Since its founding in 1916, NAWDAC has been a professional organization committed to the strengthening of educational opportunities and sevices for women. The organization sponsors an annual national conference, regional and drive-in workshops, and internships. It offers a network of 2,000 members in 50 states, serving women in education through its publications, professional development programs, and efforts on behalf of women at the national level.

American Council On Education (ACE)

The American Council on Education sponsors a variety of programs of particular interest to administrators in higher education. Among them is the annual publication of the ***Guide to Professional Development Opportunities for College and University Administrators,*** which lists hundreds of training and development programs sponsored by a wide variety of organizations and associations. In addition to its institute for college and university administrators and its fellow program in academic administration (see below), ACE sponsors a program specifically related to women, the National Identification Program for the Advancement of Women in Higher Education. The Program now operates in 49 states. In each, panels or committees of senior men and women in higher education work to identify and help place women in administrative positions. The Washington-based program office seeks to coordinate the activities of the state groups and to encourage other iniatives.

Higher Education Resource Services (HERS)

Initiated in 1972 at Brown University with funding from the Ford Foundation, HERS has grown to include three distinct regional programs: HERS-New England, moved to Wellesley College in 1977; HERS-Mid-Atlantic, opened in 1975 at the University of Pennsylvania; and HERS-West Coast, established at the

For further information contact:

Project on the Status Education of Women
1818 R Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20009
(202) 387-1300
Director: Bernice Resnick Sandler

(NAWDAC)
1625 I Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006
(202) 659-9330

American Council On Education (ACE)
Guide to Professional Training Programs (published annually)
Office of Women
In Higher Education
Director: Emily Taylor

One Dupont Circle, N.W.
Wshington, D.C. 20036

(HERS)
New England
Wellesley College
Wellesley, Mass. 02181
(617) 235-7173
Director: Lilli S. Hornig

University of Utah in 1978. HERS seeks to act as a catalyst in creating an atmosphere where women can develop techniques and support groups to advance individually and collectively in their professions (Jackson 1979). It fosters collegial relationships and the exchange of ideas.

All three regions are concerned with training and professional development for women in higher education administration, but each has developed distinctive program components. HERS-New England conducts research on women administrators and sponsors training programs throughout the country. HERS-Mid-Atlantic sponsors a summer institute (see below), many campus-based programs and workshops, and project APPLE (Access to Power: Program of Leadership Education), a FIPSE-funded (Fund for the Improvement of Post Secondary Education) project at the University of Pennsylvania offering leadership and management training to coeducational groups of students. HERS-West Coast also offers seminars and workshops for women administrators.

Mid-Atlantic
Univ. of Pennsylvania
3601 Locust Walk/C8
Philadelphia, Pa. 19104
(215) 243-5426
Director: Cynthia Secor

West Coast
University of Utah
Salt Lake City, UT 84112
(801) 581-8030
Director: Shauna Adix

Women's Educational Equity Act Program (WEEAP)

WEEAP is a federally funded program employing a variety of intervention strategies to reduce persistent barriers to the advancement of women in a variety of educational settings, including higher education administration. The Program annually awards grants to various educational institutions for projects, many of which are in higher education. In 1977, the women's program office awarded the Educational Development Center in Newton, Massachusetts, a contract to facilitate the dissemination of its programs and products nationwide. The Program has sponsored Project DELTA (Design for Equity: Leadership, Training, Attitude), designed as an exportable model for enhancing the entry of women into, and their advancement within, leadership and decision-making roles in higher education. The Project conducted workshops and seminars for faculty, administrators, and support personnel, developed a regional network for professional women in higher education, and offered leadership training to teams from colleges and universities. It is based at Wichita State University.

(WEEAP)
55 Chapel Street
Newton, Mass. 02160
(617) 969-7100
Contact: Gail Odeoneal

NATIONAL AND REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

Some institutes, internships and other training programs, workshops, and conferences have been developed especially for women administrators, while others have announced commitments to affirmative action and actively sought the participation of women. Colleges and universities can identify women employees with leadership potential and encourage them to participate in such programs. Individuals can ask to be sponsored or attend on their own. Most of these programs seek to enhance administrative skills, general and specific knowledge about higher education, and leadership capacity.

Institutes

Institutes usually last 4 to 6 weeks and are usually residential programs on a college campus. They include course work and other experiences that have been especially developed to provide information about administration and the development of skills. They are taught by faculty in education and/or business.

Institute for Education Management (IEM)

IEM is a 6-week summer program sponsored by the School of Education at Harvard University, which from the early 1970s has included a number of women administrators. The Harvard program is targeted for top-level administrators and seeks to provide a general examination of leadership needs in higher education as well as specific tools and techniques currently employed in the field. It also provides an ongoing network through annual seminars for program graduates.

Institute for Educational Management (IEM)
Harvard Sch. of Education
Appian Way
Cambridge, Mass. 02138

Institute for Administrative Advancement

The Institute for Administrative Advancement, funded by the Carnegie Corporation and the Ford Foundation, is a 6-week program modeled after Harvard's IEM but especially designed for women administrators. The Institute was originally held at the University of Michigan, but currently it is sponsored by the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Institute for Administrative Advancement
University of Wisconsin
Madison, Wis. 53706

HERS Summer Institute for Women in Higher Education Administration

The Institute, initiated in 1976 and operated at Bryn Mawr College, is also patterned on the Harvard model but offered for women administrators. Its purpose is to train professional women for more responsible administrative positions in higher education. The Summer Institute has trained over 365 professional women in higher education to prepare them for greater administrative responsibilities that require effective and creative use of existing talent and the acquisition of new skills.

HERS Summer Institute
Bryn Mawr College
Bryn Mawr, Pa. 19010
(215) 645-5173
Nancy Monnich

Institute for College and University Administrators of the American Council on Education

The Institute offers a series of annual programs targeted at specific types of administrators--presidents, vice presidents for academic affairs, deans, business officers, and administrators of student affairs.

Higher Education Management Institute of the American Council on Education (HEMI)

HEMI, a nonprofit foundation that became a unit of ACE in 1979, developed this 3-year management training program for academic and other administrators in colleges and universities in 1976. The Exxon Education Foundation, which provided more than $2 million to cover the complete cost of developing the program, offered grants on a competitive basis to 40 small institutions. More than 100 colleges and universities are currently using the program.

ACE
One Dupont Circle, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

INDIVIDUALS

While many programs and strategies can help women achieve high-level administrative positions, no real short cuts exist. Women have to want the positions, be willing to work to acquire the knowledge, credentials, skills, and experience for them, and be willing to do the work demanded of such positions. Many argue that women have a special need to develop self-confidence and a positive attitude toward success for top-level administrative positions. They must also help other women and act as role models and mentors for other administrators and students. Hays (1978), Freeman (1977), and Weaver (1978) offer a number of suggestions:

- Get formal credentials and experience through degree programs, committee work, etc., to qualify for administrative positions.
- Take part in national training programs and in institutional programs. Put yourself forward and request institutional sponsorship.
- Learn as much as possible about the broad concerns and administrative aspects of the college or university. Understand the budget process. Seek opportunities to learn and expand experience.
- Spend time analyzing where you are, where you want to be, and how to get there. Be sure there is no conflict between the position and your personal needs. Develop positive attitudes toward leadership.
- Use your influence to help other women.

ASSESSMENTS AND IMPLICATIONS

Although the number of organizations and special programs attests to widespread interest in increasing the number of women in higher education administration and committing organizations to finding solutions, few current programs have been evaluated (Stringer 1977; Kanter and Wheatley 1978; Edwards 1979; Jackson 1979). "Internship programs have been found to enhance self-confidence, provide 'nuts and bolts' education and experience and 'intangible political insights', the understanding that comes from being near the seat of power in an educational setting" (Stringer 1977, p.24). The Edwards study shows that a higher percentage of women who attended internship programs reported a positive and concrete impact on their careers than did women who attended summer institutes. On the other hand, summer institutes were found to be effective, especially by women who were selected for advancement and sponsored by their institutions and who could take advantage of networks.

It is clear that special training programs do not substitute for academic credentials or usually provide access to entry-level positions, but they seem to introduce women to broad issues of administration, contribute to a sense of professional identity, increase visibility, and provide access to female role models and important professional networks (Edwards 1979).

It is not possible to assess the value of workshops, conferences, and short programs because they vary with the individual participants and specific purposes. They appear, however, to be positively related to career advancement and professional self-image for many women administrators (Edward 1979).

A more fundamental consideration is the way women administrators can or should function in higher education.

> Many researchers suggest that the way for women administrators to achieve success in the administrative world is to cultivate typical "male" characteristics—aggressiveness, toughness, political know-how, competitive spirit, ability to make quick objective decisions without interference from emotions. Others, however, suggest that women should not take on the "male" characteristics but should give a generous transfusion of typical "female" attributes to the administrative world to make it a better place in which to function (Freeman 1977, p. 22).

It is impossible to know whether the status of women in higher education administration can be improved substantially over the next decade, given the prospects for higher education as a whole.

It is impossible to know whether the status of women in higher education administration can be improved substantially over the next decade, given the prospects for higher education as a whole. This situation does not mean, however, that colleges and universities should not seek to employ and advance women administrators or that individual women should not themselves seek to advance. We simply must work harder to improve the status of women administrators.

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The ACE/HEMI Institute includes five phases dealing with management tasks, processes, activities, and skills. HEMI supplies consultation, process materials, training procedures, and development manuals covering 45 topics, including leadership motivation, planning, decision making, budgeting, marketing, time management, negotiating, and career planning.

Internships

Administrative internships afford the opportunity for day-to-day administrative experience either at the home campus or at a comparable institution. Often they provide faculty women the administrative experience they lack and/or women administrators the experience of working closely with top-level administrators on institutional issues and concerns. Two programs designed especially for women administrators, one at the Claremont Colleges and the other at Cedar Crest College, were funded by the Carnegie Corporation for several years during the 1970s but have since been discontinued. Women are encouraged to apply to the ACE Fellows Program in Academic Administration, and several colleges and universities have developed in-house internship programs.

ACE has for many years sponsored its Fellows Program to provide opportunities for administrative experience to faculty members who might be interested in leadership positions in higher education. In recent years, special efforts have been made to include women and minority group members among the fellows. Selected by national panels, ACE interns usually spend the year working with the president of different host institutions and occasionally meet for special seminars and activities.

ACE

Academic Administration
One Dupont Circle, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036
(202) 833-4692

Workshops and Conferences

Each year brings an increasing number of special workshops and conferences sponsored by a variety of professional associations and women's organizations. The programs range from helping individuals write a resume and prepare for a job interview to state-of-the-art techniques for handling special administrative problems in colleges and universities. In some cases, conferences are offered exclusively for women; in others, associations have special women's caucuses and sessions as part of a more broadly based program; in still others, women are included among other professionals. Of special note is the annual meeting of the American Association of Higher Education (AAHE), which features many presentations on issues affecting women in higher education. The AAHE Women's Caucus sponsors a wide variety of special events at the annual meeting. Overall, workshops and conferences provide important sources of information and access to peer networks for participants. The ***Chronicle of Higher Education*** is the best source of information on these activities, particularly its monthly calendar of events, but the ACE ***Guide to Professional Training Programs*** is also useful.

(AAHE) Women's Caucus

Faculty Development
Hampton Institute
Hampton, Va. 23668
(804) 727-5705
Chair: Ruth Swann

INSTITUTIONAL PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

A variety of opportunities on campus can increase the number of women in administrative positions.

Affirmative Hiring Goals

Colleges and universities are required to develop affirmative action plans with specific hiring goals in various administrative categories. Too often this requirement is viewed as an exercise rather than as a guide to decision making, but the plans can be helpful if they are taken seriously by every level of administration. Some institutions have made excellent progress by setting aside certain positions to be filled only if suitable women candidates can be found.

Affirmative Recruitment and Selection

Nearly all colleges and universities now advertise openings and encourage women and minority group members to apply. They can take additional affirmative steps by taking advantage of national identification programs and other sources of information to identify women candidates for administrative positions. They can also actively involve women in recruitment and selection committees.

Campus Training and Development Programs

While many colleges hve training programs for support personnel, only a few have sought to develop programs for more advanced administrative personnel. Such programs might include internships with the president or other high-level administrative officials and could help increase the number of top-level women administrators.

Acting Positions and Ad Hoc Administrative Assignments

Valuable administrative experience and campus visibility can be obtained from service in acting or ad hoc positions. Campus officials can make special efforts to appoint women in such positions. Project teams could be developed as temporary operating structures to work on specific topics of importance to the institution (Kanter and Wheatley 1978). The teams should include men and women at senior and junior levels, and the projects should be of sufficient scope and duration to allow for formal and informal training opportunities and greater knowledge of institutional practices.

Support Systems for Women

Many colleges and universities have recognized the importance of support systems and networks for women administrators and have provided incentives such as release time for faculty and staff, clerical support, office space, and other institutional resources for their development.

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Administrator's Update is prepared by the ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education, The George Washington University, D.C., Series Editor is Glenn M. Nelson, Associate Professor of Higher Education at the University of Pittsburgh. The material in this publication was prepared pursuant to a contract with the National Institute of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Contractors undertaking such projects under government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their judgment in professional and technical matters. Prior to publication, the manuscript was submitted to the American Association of University Administrators for critical review and determination of professional competence. This publication has met such standards. Points of view or opinion, however, do not necessarily represent the official view or opinions of either the AAUA or the National Institute of Education.

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